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Records-4

29 August 1951

## MEMORANDUM FOR CIA RECORDS OFFICER

SUBJECT: Preliminary Survey Report of the Communications Office

A study of the records problems of the Communications Office has been completed. The preliminary report, supported by attachments A through C3, is submitted for review. The attachments are identified as follows:

Tab A	- Request for Records Management Study
Tab B	- Initial Report of Study
Tab C1	- Background Information
Tab C2	- Statement of the Problem
Tab C3	- Existing Conditions and Procedures

## DISCUSSION

During the course of this preliminary study, the scope of which is indicated in Tab C2, the following observations were made:

1. The Communications Office is new (see Tab C1), and untried, even though it once operated as a division of the Office of Special Operations. There has been no adequate "shake-down" period for administrative procedures. As a result, a fluid situation, bordering on confusion, exists (see Tab A, Par. 2 as an example). Any organization undergoing a major reorganization, with its segments taking on new and unfamiliar duties, presents the same problems.

2. As the entire organization is affected so are its parts, the Administrative Staff (including the Mail and Files Section), of the Communications Office, in this case, being no exception. However, it appears that the Mail and Files Section is performing its job and the Supervisor has, and is continuing to, formulate plans (see Tab C2, Par. 2) for the functioning of mail and files activities. In fact, I believe that this study was, in part, requested to gain support for and lend backing to plans already made or in process of being made.

3. The primary difficulty confronting all units of the Communications Office is lack of time to perform necessary mail and filing functions. This lack of time may be divided into two component parts; (a) in physically getting documents to the activity which should take action, and, (b) in filing and finding of filed material. The actual division and branch files seem quite adequate, although there is some need of better indexing and cross referencing.

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to resolve the primary difficulty confronting the units of the Communications Office(as outlined in Par. 3 above), and to ensure maximum control of material with a minimum of control effort, it is recommended that:

1. Certain unnecessary steps now performed in the Mail and Files Section, Administrative Staff, be eliminated and others modified as indicated below.

a. Modify courier receipting procedure(Tab C3, Par. 2b), by preparing only two copies of the courier receipt rather than three as at present, leaving the second copy in the courier receipt book for the courier to sign.

b. Eliminate the handwritten abstract(Tab C3, Par. 2b(14)), made by the Mail and Files Section supervisor, allowing the typist to compose and type the control slips(Tab C3, Par. 2b(20)), in one operation. The supervisor should indicate routing only, thereby saving time for more important duties.

c. Abbreviate all words possible, including security classifications, when control slips are typed.

d. Indicate only the date a document is dispatched from the Mail and Files Section, unless it is not the same as the date received in the Section, thus eliminating unnecessary typing.

e. Route documents to action officers, not just to divisions or branches.

f. Establish a routing guide for the router in the Mail and Files Section. Although it may not be necessary for the router to refer to this guide often, it will provide a quick locator when needed, and will ensure accurate routing in the absence of the Section supervisor.

g. Eliminate all logging and log books, except for top secret documents, in the Mail and Files Section(Tab C3, Par. 2b(18) and (24)). Use control slips as logs(note 'k' below and Par. 2a, Recommendations).

h. Establish the number one copies of the control slips, because of their legibility and good condition, as the primary Control Number File.

i. Establish the number two copies of the control slips as the Suspense File.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS(Cont'd)**

j. Establish the number three copies of the control slips as the Source File.

k. Attach all other copies(numbers four, five, and six), to action documents only and forward. If the action officer transfers an action copy of a document to another person, he will return one copy of the attached control slips to the Mail and Files Section with appropriate information noted on it as to where and when he made the transfer. This recommendation successfully eliminates all but top secret logging in all units and, at the same time, ensures a firm control of all action or confirmation copies of documents at all times.

l. Destroy all "Retain or Destroy" type material. Return no such documents to the Signal Center.

m. Assign a messenger to the Mail and Files Section to make scheduled, and special, intra-Office mail deliveries. This will save several man hours every day of the time of secretaries and clerks in the divisions and branches who normally carry such mail. This time could then be devoted to maintaining unit files.

2. In addition to the above, which deals almost exclusively with the Mail and Files Section, Administrative Staff, it is further recommended that all units:

a. Eliminate all logging and log books, except for top secret documents, in all units of the Communications Office. Use mail control slips attached to documents(see l, g and k, above), as control medium by returning a copy each time an action copy of a document is transferred between units.

b. Destroy all "Retain or Destroy" type documents when their usefulness is at an end rather than returning them to the Mail and Files Section.

3. If the above recommendations are placed in effect, it is felt that the individual units, and the Mail and Files too, will have sufficient time to ensure accurate and efficient filing, indexing, and cross referencing. However, at some future date when conditions have become more settled, it may be necessary to study the files of each division separately and make recommendations.

ANALYST

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**TAB A**

**REQUEST FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT STUDY**

25X1 1. This tab provides a copy of the original memorandum from [redacted] Chief, Communications Division, Office of Special Operations, dated 25 June 1951, to the Advisor for Management requesting a review of the existing Communications Division filing system and recommendations for its improvement.

25X1 2. In addition, it should be stated that some confusion resulted when [redacted] Records Management and Distribution Branch, Administrative Services, began the study requested by [redacted]

25X1 [redacted] discussions with [redacted] Administrative Officer, Communications Office [redacted] Chief, Mail and Files Section, Administrative Staff, and the Communications Office division chiefs, disclosed the presence of various other problems which indicated the need for a more detailed study, generally broader in scope, than indicated in the attached memorandum. The study was to include the functions and procedures of the Mail and Files Section, intra-Office mail procedures, including control mechanisms, and the division files. With the approval of [redacted] such a study was begun.

25X1 Through unfortunate misunderstanding, someone, evidently [redacted] objected to that part of the study not dealing exclusively with the filing system. As a result, [redacted] called the Advisor for Management indicating dissatisfaction with the work undertaken by [redacted]

On 10 August 1951 this writer called [redacted] to determine what type of study was required. Some of the confusion was dispelled when he verified that he wanted the broader study, rather than that indicated in [redacted] memorandum of the 25th.

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THRU : Advisor for Management  
AD/SO  
Chief, Communications Division

25 June 1951

This office contemplates the establishment of a more centralized and simplified filing system within the Communications Division. In this connection, it is requested that the services of an expert on office management systems be made available for the purpose of conducting a review of the existing filing system leading to a recommendation of methods for its improvement.



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**TAB B**

**INITIAL REPORT OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT STUDY**

1. This tab provides a copy of [ ] memorandum of 25 July 1951 to the Chief, Records Management and Distribution Branch, Administrative Services, summarizing his study of the records problems in the Communications Office from 25 June to 25 July.

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Chief, Records Management & Distribution Br.

25 July 1951

Records Study in Communications Office

1. This summarizes the study of records problems in the Communications Office to date. This study was conducted by assignment to this Branch for action of a memo to the Advisor for Management, dated 25 June 1951, from the Chief, Communications Division ( then part of OSO)

2. In the initial interview with [redacted] Administrative Officer, it was arranged for [redacted] Chief of the Mail and Files activity to introduce the writer to Branch Chiefs. Incidentally, the writer was erroneously identified as being from Management, in that he was introduced as the person sent in response to their request to the Advisor for Management for help in records problems.

3. Discussions with [redacted] and the Branch Chiefs call attention to two problems, the first, the difficulties of physically getting documents to the activities which should take actions, and the second concerned the problems of filing and finding filed material. Work was undertaken in this order.

4. It was discovered that Branches experienced difficulties not so much with the existing filing systems and with finding enough time to perform filing operations and preparing necessary finding aids. A few changes in the Mail and Files section will save 2 man-hours per day which could be spent in other work. Assignment of a messenger to the Mail and Files to carry papers back and forth to the Branches will save each one an hour or more a day to spend in files maintenance. Branch clerks could find more time for files work if their own logging operations were simplified.

5. At the same time these observations were being made, the writer was also considering how the files should be set up. It was observed that the case filing in the Branches was largely adequate, though cross-indexing is necessary in several cases. It does not appear reasonable to centralize all files, but files in the Operations Branch and to some extent in the Administrative offices, should be centralized, with one or more persons assigned full-time responsibility for their operation. Further study of these files should be made.

6. A verbal progress report, incorporating these observations was made to [redacted] on 18 July. It was hoped that a written report could be made within a few days thereafter, to form the basis for initial corrective actions of Communications Office. It was recognized that continued study would be needed to smooth out some of the problems of handling material received via pouch and of coordination of documents requiring immediate action involving more than one Branch.

(Signed)

W. J. M.

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

1. On 1 July 1951 the Communications Division, Office of Special Operations, became an independent organization on the Office level. As a result, the need arose for dealing with the receipt, processing, filing, controlling, and dispatching of cables and other documents previously handled by Office of Special Operations mail and file units. This, in turn, led to the establishment of the Mail and Files Section, Administrative Staff.

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TAB C2

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

1. The Administrative Officer, Communications Office, is desirous of obtaining recommendations regarding the functions and procedures of the newly established Mail and Files (Registry) Section, Administrative Staff, and the establishment of a simplified filing system for use in all divisions of the Communications Office.

2. In this writer's conversations with the Administrative Officer, and, more particularly [redacted] the Mail and Files Section Supervisor, it became evident that plans pertinent to the future functions and procedures of the Mail and Files Section had progressed quite far. In fact, Mr. [redacted] of OSO/IID had visited with [redacted] outlining the similar activities in the Office of Special Operations and drawing up an organization and functions program for the Mail and Files Section. He also left her a copy of the OSO/IID mail and file manual.

It is my impression that [redacted] has no desire to have any help in setting up mail and files procedures, since she believes she already has adequate plans. She would like approval of these plans, however.

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TAB C3

**EXISTING CONDITIONS AND OPERATIONS****1. Incoming and Outgoing Mail**

a. The Mail and Files Section of the Administrative Staff receives and dispatches all mail entering or leaving the Communications Office, except cryptographic material which is received initially by the Signal Center, and some items occasionally delivered unopened to the Assistant Director for Communications. This section has a staff of three, including the supervisor.

b. Mail is received and dispatched by the following means:

(1) Mail to and from OSO, OPC, Signal Center, and other offices in L, K, and I buildings is received and dispatched in locked pouches every hour via OSO/IID top secret courier.

(2) Mail to and from offices in Quarters I, other than the Communications Office, is received and dispatched hourly via CIA messengers.

(3) Special deliveries only are made by CIA couriers.

(4) Employees of the various Communications Office divisions deliver and pickup all internal (intra-Office) mail required to pass through the Mail and Files Section. No set schedule is adhered to.

(5) OSO/IID provides service for Communications Office overseas pouch traffic.

**2. Mail and Files Section**

a. In addition to initial receipt and final dispatch of mail, the Mail and Files Section is charged with the following duties:

(1) Review of incoming mail for abstracting, recording, and routing.

(2) Control of incoming and outgoing mail by assignment of control numbers, preparation of control slips (Form 35-1), and maintenance of suspense records.

(3) Control of top secret documents as an Area Top Secret Control Office.

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(4) Control of intra-Office mail.

(5) Maintenance of files of control slips, pseudonyms (cover names for individuals), and cryptonyms (cover names for projects in which the Communications Office has an interest).

b. Receipt, routing, and control procedures are indicated as follows:

The mail clerk [redacted], receipts for all cables and mail except non-cable top secret material, which is receipted for by the typist [redacted]

Mail Clerk

(1) Opens envelopes and checks contents with the inside document receipt.

(2) Signs receipts and places them in outgoing mail.

(3) Sorts all documents which can be handled without routing into mail distribution rack on desk.

(4) Reviews other documents to determine whether they should be routed for action, information or confirmation.

(5) Selects appropriate cover sheets and attaches to documents.

(6) Determines originators control number and marks cover sheet in space indicated for "Accession Number."

(7) Determines recipients control number and marks cover sheet in space indicated for "Date Received SA."

(8) Stamps in the "Comments" column of the cover sheet either "Extra Copy To" or writes "No Extra Copy" if only one copy was received.

(9) Checks the Mail and Files Section document log for previous Mail and Files Section control number if the document makes reference to a previously handled document. Finds previous control slip and attaches to the document for information of the router.

(10) Places mail on the Mail and Files Section supervisor's desk for routing.

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Mail and Files Section Supervisor

- (11) Reads each document to determine action branch and any other routing.
- (12) Writes routing on cover sheets of various copies for action, information or confirmation.
- (13) Writes additional (secondary) routing of copies on cover sheets after the stamped notation "Extra Copy To -."
- (14) Indicates priority handling, if necessary.
- (15) Writes abstract of the document in longhand on a 3" x 5" slip and attaches to document.
- (16) Indicates suspense date.
- (17) Places documents on typist's desk.

Typist

- (18) Writes Mail and Files Section control number on cover sheet and first page of documents.
- (19) Makes longhand entry in log showing Mail and Files Section control number, cable or pouch number, other identifying numbers, and an abstract of the subject of the document.
- (20) Types 3" x 5" control slip (Form 35-1), in six copy sets, showing Mail and File Section control number, cable or pouch number, document date, abstract of the subject, routing, and suspense date.
- (21) Removes control slip copy number one for filing in the Suspense File; copy number two for filing in the Source File.
- (22) Staples control slip copy number three to the action or confirmation copy of the document; copies four, five, and six to the information copy (copies) of the document.
- (23) Places documents in completed work basket.

Mail Clerk

- (24) Picks up completed documents and sorts into mail distribution rack.

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(25) Makes longhand entry in the Mail and Files Section suspense log of control numbers and unit to which documents were routed.

(26) Files the number two copies of control slips in the Source File by source and control number.

(27) Files the number one copies of control slips in the Suspense File, or in the regular Control File if not a suspense item. Both files arranged by control numbers.

(28) Follows up on incoming communications requiring action(cables - two days, priority cables - one day, memoranda - ten days, pouches - ten days).

c. Outgoing mail is processed in substantially the same manner as explained above.

### 3. Communications Office Divisions

a. The various divisions pointed out no serious deficiencies in the present mail and filing system except difficulty in finding time to maintain their files, especially in indexing and cross referencing.

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